
INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Good Character, Good Stewards: Caring for the World Around Us*, an interdisciplinary curriculum supplement for grades K-6. *Good Character, Good Stewards...* is designed to augment existing curricula that meet Virginia Standards of Learning by integrating character education with science, math, language arts, and social science lessons. The activities focus on the concept of stewardship and the ideals of the National Park Service to provide relevant educational experiences that involve students and promote an understanding of their responsibility to care for the world and its resources.

A good steward exhibits positive character traits such as respect, caring, responsibility, and good citizenship toward the land, air, water, plants, animals, and people. Environmental stewardship is living responsibly as a caretaker of the environment for the benefit of present and future generations. A stewardship ethic is essential for the health and well-being of life on planet Earth.

"We are stewards of an irreplaceable environment. This is an awesome task as well as a precious gift."

President Jimmy Carter



The activities in this guide are designed to actively engage students in learning while relating good character lessons to a variety of other disciplines. We hope you find this material to be user-friendly, relevant to your classroom curriculum, adaptable to your time frame, and successful in achieving the learning objectives and Standards of Learning goals.

Virginia Standards of Learning

The Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools describe the commonwealth's expectations for student learning and achievement in grades K-12 in English, mathematics, science, history/social science, technology, the fine arts, foreign language, health and physical education, and driver education. These standards represent a broad consensus of what parents, classroom teachers, school administrators, academics, and business and community leaders believe schools should teach and students should learn.

Virginia Department of Education
www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Superintendent/Sols/home.shtml

Character Education

Legislation passed by the 1999 Virginia General Assembly (§22.1-208.01) requires each local school board to establish a character education program in its schools, the aim of which is to improve the learning environment, promote student achievement, reduce disciplinary problems and develop civic-minded students of high character.

Virginia Character Education Project
www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Instruction/CEP/index.html

HOW TO USE THESE LESSONS

Good Character, Good Stewards is designed to supplement and support existing lesson plans that meet Virginia Standards of Learning curriculum requirements. The activities can be expanded, adapted, and modified to meet your individual teaching needs or applied to other subjects. Your input and creativity along with students' unique learning situations and abilities will determine how far you can go!

Each lesson begins by identifying the **Curriculum** subject and **Character traits** addressed in the lesson. The suggested **Grade level(s)** and the relevant **Virginia Standards of Learning** are listed followed by the approximate **Length/duration** and the **Materials** needed to complete the entire lesson. An **Overview** provides the basic theme and goal of the lesson followed by the **Objectives** for student learning. **Background** information on the subject matter is provided as well as the suggested **Vocabulary**.

Step-by-step **Lesson** instructions begin with a **Motivational Activity** to use as a starting point and "hook" to engage the students. This is followed by a series of developmental **Activities** in which one or more curriculum subjects are incorporated. These activities may be done in developmental sequence as presented or rearranged as needed.

Assessment suggestions follow the lesson plan to verify and document achievement of the objectives. The **Going Further** and **Related Subject Activities** sections provide enrichment and expansion opportunities. **Resources and References** lists the sources of information used within the lesson. Finally, the **Glossary** provides applicable vocabulary definitions.

Each lesson includes a section that uses national parks as examples of good stewardship ideals to help meet the learning objectives of the activities.

Refer to the background on the history and mission of the National Park Service to help integrate the study of national parks with each lesson. If possible, take a field trip to one of Virginia's national park units to enhance the lessons with a hands-on experience.

Preview the guide to determine the lessons that best suit your needs. Select an individual lesson or group several lessons together for extended learning. Grade levels and time frames are suggested for each activity, but they are flexible. The activity sequence can be rearranged, if desired.

An **Evaluation Form** is included. Please make copies of the form and submit one evaluation form for each lesson you complete. Send completed forms to:

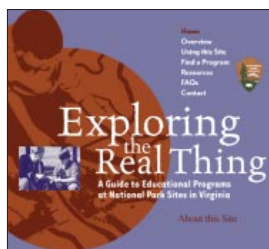
Education Office
Shenandoah National Park
3655 US Hwy 211 E
Luray, VA 22835

Your feedback is critical to help ensure that the activities are usable, relevant, and valuable as a teaching tool.

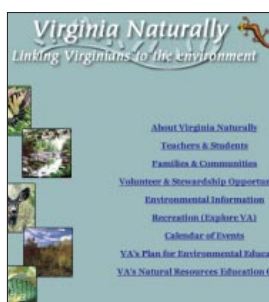


ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Many of the lessons in *Good Characters, Good Stewards* refer to activities that are easily found at the following resources.



Exploring the Real Thing: A Guide to Educational Programs at National Park Sites in Virginia provides teachers with information on curriculum-based programs and materials offered by national park areas in Virginia. The guide includes descriptions of park education programs, as well as a list of resources recommended by teachers who use national parks as part of their curriculum. <http://www.nps.gov/ERT/VA/index2.html>



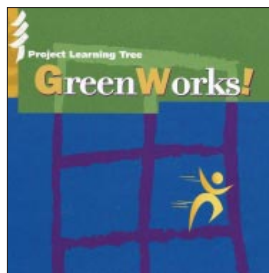
Virginia Naturally is a gateway to statewide environmental education resources that strives to link Virginians to environmental information and promote lifelong learning about Virginia's environment and the stewardship of the Commonwealth's natural and historic resources. Website: <http://www.vanaturally.com>
Environmental Education Resource Directory: <http://www.deq.state.va.us/eed>
Stewardship in Virginia: <http://www.vanaturally.com/volunteer.html>



Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Environmental Education provides teachers with resources to deliver quality environmental education programs that meet state academic standards and engage citizens in conservation activities to promote environmental stewardship in Virginia. <http://www.deq.state.va.us/education>



Project Learning Tree (PLT) is an international environmental education program that provides lesson plans and teacher training about forest communities. Activities are correlated to the Virginia Science Standards of Learning. National PLT website: <http://www.plt.org>
Virginia PLT website: <http://www.cnr.vt.edu/plt>



GreenWorks! Connecting Community Action and Service-Learning is the service-learning component of *Project Learning Tree*. By combining the environmental knowledge and resources of PLT with community action initiatives, **GreenWorks!** action projects make a difference in how young people think, in their sense of responsibility toward their communities, and in their understanding of their relationship to the environment. <http://www.plt.org/greenworks/index.cfm>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Project WILD is an international wildlife education curriculum with an emphasis on building an awareness and appreciation of wildlife that results in responsible actions towards the environment. Activities are correlated to the Virginia Science Standards of Learning.

National Project WILD website: <http://www.projectwild.org>

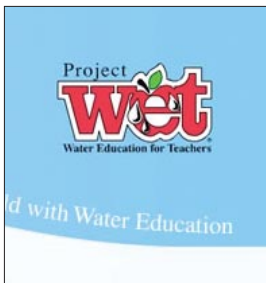
Virginia Project WILD website:

http://www.dgif.state.va.us/education/wildlife_education.html



Taking Action: An Educator's Guide to Involving Students in Environmental Action Projects

is a supplemental guide from Project WILD that inspires ideas and provides models for conducting effective environmental projects. This guide will help educators plan, implement and evaluate environmental action projects. <http://www.projectwild.org/TakingAction.htm>



Project WET: Water Education for Teachers

is a water education program that facilitates and promotes awareness, appreciation, knowledge, and stewardship of water resources through the dissemination of classroom-ready teaching aids. The activities are correlated to the Virginia Science Standards of Learning.

National Project Wet website: <http://www.projectwet.org/index.html>

Virginia Project Wet website:

<http://www.deq.state.va.us/education/wet.html>



*In the end we will conserve only
what we love. We will love only what
we understand. We will understand
only what we are taught.*

- Baba Dioum